

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method of measuring an Internet user's level of interest in a given subject, the method comprising:

establishing a count of web pages sent to a user that each contain at least a threshold number of keywords related to the given subject; and

using the count as a basis to establish a measure of the user's interest in the given subject.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising operating an Internet gateway to carry out the elements of establishing the count and using the count to establish the measure.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein using the count as a basis to establish a measure of the user's interest in the given subject comprises:

concluding that the measure is the count.

4. A method comprising:

carrying out the method of claim 1 so as to establish a measure of the user's interest in the given subject; and

using the measure as a basis to provide a service to the user.

5. A machine readable medium having stored thereon a set of instructions executable by a processor to carry out the method of claim 1.

6. A method of measuring an Internet user's level of interest in a given subject, the method comprising:

establishing a count of keywords related to the given subject that appear in web pages sent to the user; and

using the count as a basis to establish a measure of the user's interest in the given subject.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein establishing a count of keywords related to the given subject matter that appear in web pages sent to the user comprises, for each web page of a plurality of web pages sent to the user:

counting keywords related to the given subject matter that appear in the web page, and capping the count at a maximum predetermined number of keywords.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein each keyword has a respective value, and wherein establishing a count of keywords related to the given subject matter that appear in web pages sent to the user comprises, for each web page of a plurality of web pages sent to the user:

establishing a sum of the values of keywords related to the given subject matter that appear in the web page.

9. The method of claim 6, wherein using the count as a basis to establish a measure of the user's interest in the given subject comprises:
concluding that the measure is the count.

10. The method of claim 6, further comprising operating an Internet gateway to carry out the elements of establishing the count and using the count to establish the measure.

11. A machine readable medium having stored thereon a set of instructions executable by a processor to carry out the method of claim 6.

12. A method of measuring an Internet user's interest level in a given subject, the method comprising:

establishing for the user a total page count value, P, that represents a number of web pages sent to the user;

establishing for the user a subject-specific page count value, S, that represents a number web pages sent to the user that each contain at least a threshold number of keywords related to the given subject;

establishing for the user a keyword count value, K, that represents a number of keywords related to the given subject that appear in web pages sent to the user; and

using the values P, S and K, in combination, to establish a measure of the user's interest level in the given subject.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein establishing the keyword count value, K, comprises, for each web page of a plurality of web pages sent to the user:

counting keywords related to the given subject matter that appear in the web page, and capping the count at a maximum predetermined number of keywords.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein each keyword has a respective value, and wherein establishing the keyword count value, K, comprises, for each web page of a plurality of web pages sent to the user:

establishing a sum of the values of keywords related to the given subject matter that appear in the web page.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein using the values P, S and K, in combination, to establish a measure of the user's interest level in the given subject comprises:

computing the measure as $(K)(S)/(P)$.

16. The method of claim 12, further comprising:

performing the method over each of a number of successive periods of time, so as to establish respectively for each period of time a measure of the user's interest level in the given subject; and

combining the respective measures of the user's interest level over time to establish a composite measure of the user's interest level in the given subject.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein combining the respective measures of the user's interest level over time comprises:

adding the respective measures together.

18. The method of claim 16, further comprising maintaining a principal measure of the user's interest level, based on past respective measures, wherein combining the respective measures of the user's interest level over time comprises:

combining the principal measure with a new respective measure of the user's interest level.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein combining the principal measure with the new respective measure comprises:

taking a weighted sum of the principal measure and the new respective measure.

20. The method of claim 12, further comprising normalizing the measure of the user's interest level in the given subject.

21. A machine readable medium having stored thereon a set of instructions executable by a processor to carry out the method of claim 12.

22. An entity through which web pages pass on their way to a user, the entity comprising:

a processor;

data storage; and

program instructions stored in the data storage and executable by the processor (i) to establish a count of a number of keywords related to a given subject that appear in web pages sent to the user, and (ii) to use the count as a basis to establish a measure of the user's interest level in the given subject.

23. The entity of claim 22, wherein the entity is an ISP.

24. The entity of claim 22, wherein the entity is a mobile IP home agent.

25. The entity of claim 22, wherein the entity is a web server.

26. The entity of claim 22, wherein the entity is a user station.